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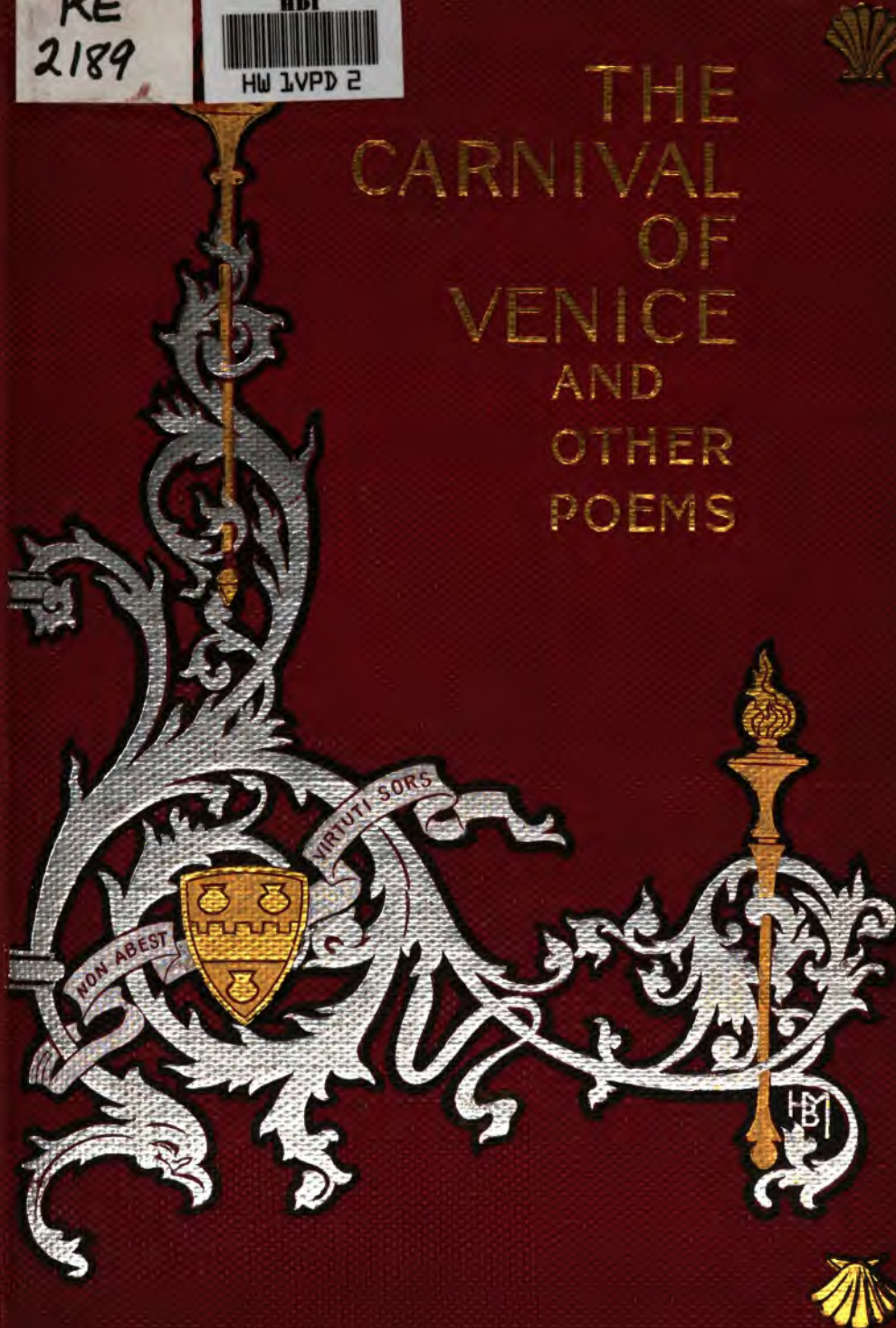
THE CARNIVAL OF VENICE

AND OTHER POEMS



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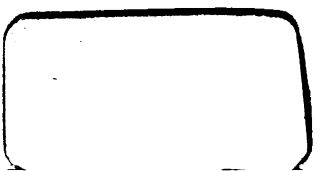

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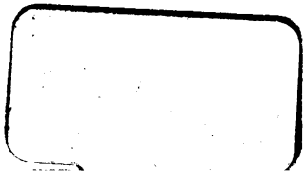

The Carnival of Venice

and

Other Poems.

by

Florence Danforth Newcomb.

F. TENNYSON NEELY,

LONDON
96 QUEEN STREET

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Duplicate Money

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To My Family

Rude Simple Verses

Are affectionately

dedicated

by

Their Sincere Friend

Index.

The Carnival of Venice, - - - 11–14

Time's Witchcraft, - - - - 15–18

Why Is It? - - - - - 19-20

For Mrs. C——y, - - - - 21–25

Discontent, - - - - - 26–30

Domestic Affliction, - - - 31–32

Her Smile, - - - - - 33–35

Anticipation, - - - - - 36–40

Summer's Dying, - - - - 41–43

A Fancy, - - - - - 44–48

Lost, - - - - - - 49–51

To My Mother, - - - - 52–54

A Serenade, - - - - - 55–56

When Absent From Me, - - 57–58

For Dear Mrs. D——s, - - - 59–62

The Toilet, - - - - - 63–65
So Tired! - - - - - 66–68
At Beverly, - - - - - 69
'Tis Only Sleep, - - - - 70–73
Morning—Anticipation, - - - 74
Noon—Fruition, - - - 75
Evening—Fulfilment, - - - 76
A Tribute, - - - - - 77–79
To Mrs. C——s B. S——r, - - 80–82
A Prayer, - - - - - 83–84
Rejection, - - - - - 85–87
The Star's Secret, - - - - 88–90
School Girls, - - - - - 91–95
Lines to a Picture of Myself, - - 96–103
Have Patience, Little Mama, - - 104–105
Ante-Nuptial Promises, - - - 106–108
An Irish Witticism, - - - 109–110
My Old Kentucky Home, - - 111–113
Naming the Day, - - - - 114–116

"Dear Friends, We've Loved and Lost," at Elberon, - - - 117–123
An Appeal, - - - - - 124–125
To a Basket of Flowers, - - - 126–133
Lines to an Infant, - - - - 134–136
For Emily's Album, - - - 137–142
"Flying Dutchman," - - - 143–148
In Memoriam, - - - - 149–153
Life, - - - - - - - 154
Yesterday—To-day—To-morrow, - 155–156
"She Hath Done What She Could," 157–161
Dream Fairies, - - - - 162–164
My Lady Fair, - - - - - 165–169
A Lullaby, - - - - - 170–172

"THE CARNIVAL OF VENICE."

A Painting by Carl Becker.

A pleasing episode of that world-renowned holiday, the sounds of which Paganini combined in the wonderful composition for the violin which bears its name. An Italian noble and his wife are walking along an arcade of the piazza of St. Mark; the cicisbeo of the lady, who is thrumming a guitar, whispers in her ear from behind his mask; other figures occupy the middle ground, while from the upper windows of the palazzo, across the open court, lords and ladies look down upon the revelry and the merry-makers of the carnival.

THE sun looks out from a southern sky
Upon a merry scene,
And gay Venetians quickly hie
With ringing laugh and sparkling eye
And stately gallant mien.

Ah, happier you with only flowers
To wreathe your floating hair,
Than she, who, pride of bower and hall
Can summon vassals at her call,
And reign as sovereign there.

TIME'S WITCHCRAFT.

A LAUGHING, crowing, cunning babe,
With dimpled arms of snow,
Who reckoned not the love I gave,
Has flown—I had no power to save.
Where did my darling go?

The little, precious, half-worn shoes,
The baby linen white,
With knots of ribbon, azure blue,
Which bound the hair that careless grew,
I've hid away from sight.

There are no tears within the folds
Of all these garments sweet.
And tho' I look with tender eyes
Upon those tiny shoes I prize
Which held my baby's feet—
There is no sorrow in my heart,
Only a start of pain,
For never to my mother heart
I'll press *that* babe again.

'Twas Time who surely, gently stole
My little one from me.
He came by night and every day
He snatched some baby grace away,
Some charm of infancy.

He placed within the rosy lips
A row of fairy pearls;
He lengthened out with fingers old
The hair, which fell like burnished gold,
To clustering silken curls.

He taught each day some pretty word
Of fond endearment sweet,
And guided with untiring hand,
Along life's vast, mysterious land,
The ever faltering feet.

And thus it was the months sped on
Till winter's snow flakes told
That Time had left me as he flew,
My little three-year-old.

If only mother's love could keep
The bitter tears away,
The pangs which fall to woman's lot,
And which must come some day.
If only mother's love could shield
Her child by earnest prayers,
And take upon herself life's stabs,
Its many thorns and cares,

Then might I with a peaceful heart,
Watch Time and her at play,
And see him lead with promise sweet
The willing steps away.
But as it is, there comes a pain,
A sadness all untold—
I often think I'd always like
To keep her three years old.

WHY IS IT?

WHY is it that the tenderest buds
Feel first the nipping frost?
Why is it that the fairest bloom
Is sweetest when its lost?
Why is it that the saddest eyes
Are those which never weep?
"He chasteneth whom He loveth most,"
Then His beloved sleep.

As thro' a glass we darkly see,
We cannot understand.
The inner working of His will,
The mysteries of His hand.
We only know that gentlest souls
Suffer the world's cold blast;
And those who most intensely feel,
Under the rod have passed

FOR MRS. C——Y.

Aiken, S. C., 1896.

WHAT matters, if the frosts of time
Have left their trace of white,
And that the milestones of one's life,
Seem passing out of sight—

There's love and beauty, all around,
Notwithstanding these depart,
For the secret of all happiness
Is the Springtime in the heart.

We gather still the dainty flowers,
With all their rich perfume,
We feel the languor of the hours,
Which comes with balmy June.

We live again in children bright
Who dance about our knee,
And with the Springtime in our heart,
The laugh comes readily.

And 'tho we lose, we also gain
That which we value much,
The gentleness of glance and speech,
The sympathetic touch.

The giving out of all our best,
The pleasure to impart,
The happiness which only comes
From the Springtime in our heart!

And you, dear friend, may well delight,
How richly are you blest,
The memories of joy and fun,
If they were all confessed,

Alone would fill some lengthy day
With reminiscence sweet.
That merry twinkle in your eye
Would make the tale complete.

For you have danced as few have danced,
So gay and debonair,
And sung the moments swift away,
With light and careless air.

And yet, when sorrows fell, 'tho love
Could not bid all trace depart,
You kept, with rare and wondrous grace,
The Springtime of the heart!

Thus, midst the friends who love you well,
How young! How sweet! How dear!
'Tho absent, may I not with them
Give you my tribute here?

We'd gladly follow in your ways
  Until we reach that heaven,
Where the Springtime's never ending,
  And God's peace and joy are given.

DISCONTENT.

SAD, unhappy, discontented,
For it was a dreary day,
Mourned I o'er the gloomy weather,
Fretting at the sun's delay.

Down upon the garden blossoms,
Soft and bright and swift it came,
But I heard no angel's whisper
In the gently falling rain.

Long I watched the little children
  Hastening quickly home from school,
Running fast, with ringlets flying,
  Skipping past each gathering pool,

Listening to their merry laughter,
  Brimming full of childish mirth,
I forgot my dismal feelings,
  And the cause which gave them birth.

Happy are those urchins' faces,
  Fresh and gay the fragile flowers.
Why should I be discontented,
  If above the dark sky lowers,—

Hush, my heart, cease thy repining
Let thy sinful murmurings rest,
'Tis a cloud with silver lining,
Hides the mansions of the blest.

I could see its bright reflection,
Sparkling in the summer rain,
I could hear an angel's whisper,
As it sweetly, softly came—

Clear and low its cherished accents
Sighed it to the garden flowers,
While they, with their heads uplifted,
Breathed their thanks for welcome showers.

On the grass, in groups and clusters,
  Gleamed the light drops, dazzling fair,
Heaven had opened wide her casket,
  And her jewels scattered there.

Soon a fairy bow of promise
  Glistened in the western sky,
And some truant, wandering sunbeams,
  Tinted with their golden dye,

All the pearly gems which sparkled
On each trembling bud and leaf,
Coloring with a magic beauty,
E'en the green grass underneath.

Yes, the many clouds are breaking,
Angels now have dried their tears,
And the smile of the Almighty
In the brightening heaven appears.

Where, sad heart, are thy vain moanings?
Vanquished ere the sunlight came,
For thou feel'st how gladly welcome,
Was the needed summer's rain.

DOMESTIC AFFLICTION.

A Painting by Duverger.

NO more, sweet sister, put aside
The cup of water clear,
For closer comes God's messenger,
And Death is very near.
Its pallor is upon her cheek,
Its dimness in her eye.
Why must our loved and beautiful,
So early fade and die.

She faints! She gasps! The little hand
So wasted, wan and white,
No longer holds the canvas wrought
With many colors bright.
And he, who but a moment since,
So hopeful knelt beside,
Stands frenzied, crazed, as marble pale,
Near to his worshiped bride.

The book she read, half open lies
Upon the divan near,
Her eager eyes no more will rest
Upon its fancies dear.
Draw back the curtain, let the breeze
Of evening fan her brow.
And fold her closer, sister sweet,
She's dying, even now.

HER SMILE.

SHE is wilful! She is haughty! She is proud!
Capricious and flirtatious all the while;
But her charms are so many,
With these foibles all allowed,
We find ourselves forgiving 'neath her smile.
And the sternest censor living
Would unbend and be her slave,
Beneath the magic sunshine of her smile.

'Tis not the tearful dark eyes,
So tender and so soft,
'Tho they captivate as surely as appeal
'Tis not the loving touch
Of her fingers light and warm,
Whose caressings you so willingly feel.
But the fascinating magnetism,
Enslaving you the while,
In the radiant, wondrous loveliness
Of her sweet and sunny smile.

No artist e'er could catch it,
On her features pale and fair.
They have pictured her a beauty,
And her portrait hanging there
With its gown of creamy satin
And its laces rich and rare.
With the lustre of her brown eyes,
And the smooth coils of dark hair,
And the jewelled, ruby bracelet,
She always loved to wear.

Is so beautiful! So beautiful!
'Twould all the world beguile,
If art could snatch the speaking,
Tender radiance of her smile.

ANTICIPATION.

OFT, as a child, with yearning heart,
I've turned towards the sea,
And wondered when some friendly wind
Would waft my ship to me.

And with an earnest, trusting faith,
Believed what nurse would say:
And dreamed each night, of treasures sweet
That ship would bring some day.

I've watched and waited many years,
And always looked in vain;
For, only my sad doubts and fears
Come back to me again.

And many a wish for something dear,
I've sent across the sea;
But time has proved, that phantom boat,
Will never come to me.

Far in the West the sun goes down,
And on the waters wide,
Some little schooners, with their freight,
Are drifting down the tide.

Perhaps they've seen my fairy bark,
Upon the ocean blue;
She may have stopped on foreign shores,
Oh, if I only knew!

Her sides are bright like burnished gold,
Her masts are dazzling fair,
Her sails are set and firmly tied
With strings of coral rare.

She's decked from bow to stern with gems,
And like a thing of light,
Is formed to sail thro' clearest day,
Or in the darkest night.

Two Angels' hands are on the helm,
And guard with faithful eyes.
They've covered with a silver net,
All that I dearly prize.

The darling hopes, the sacred prayers,
Are safe with them I know.
But they drift never into sight,
While others come and go.

How can I drop the childish faith,
Cherished so dearly long.
And feel there was no word of truth,
Told in old nurse's song.

But many an eager little one
Has watched the darkening sea,
And older hearts have lost the ship,
Which never comes to me.

SUMMER'S DYING.

SADLY all the world now sings,
'Tis no use denying,
Far away seems leafy June,
Summer's dying! dying!

All the forests sing the song,
E'en the sunbeams flying
Write upon the yellow sands
Summer's dying! dying!

A FANCY.

St. Regis Lake—Adirondacks.

ACROSS the lake where the fir trees
Like solemn sentries stand,
I saw in the dusk of the evening,
The beckoning of a hand—
In the dusk of the summer evening,
A fragile, snow white hand.

It came from a boat that was drifting,
While the shadows lay over all,
And the purple light from the hill-sides
Covered things with its purple pall,
And all I could see was the beckoning,
Of this hand so white and small.

As I dreaming lay in the shadows
  Which come at the close of day,
I felt as if fairy fingers
  Were pointing upward the way;
And a voice stole over the waters,
  Come with me without delay.

Snatching my boat from its moorings,
  Its oars I trembling took,
And over the silent waters
  Eager for one chance look,
Through the leaves of the pink pond lilies
  My paddles, the echoes woke.

So I followed in awe and silence,
My own weird thoughts at will,
Looking forward at every turning
For the hand that now was still.
And I paddled and rowed through the darkness,
With a growing sense of ill;

With the moon climbing over the
mountains
A feeling of weariness came.
And the foliage green on the edges,
Seemed ever and ever the same,
'Till I saw in the bushes a boatman,
Then my errand I tried to explain.

He shook away sleep as he listened,
While I talked of the phantom hand,
Which beckoned me over the waters,
Away from the other land.

"'Tis only the wraith of St. Regis," said he,
"And the musical whispers fanned,
Float often on certain evenings
From dusky strand to strand—
'Tis only the wraith of St. Regis,
Go back, its charms withstand."

LOST.

SHE dropped them on the stair:
From out the radiant glittering hair,
The rosebud fell.
This little glove so pearly white,
I also found and hid from sight,
But do not tell.

Life's roses long since bloomed for me,
Time proved their sweetness mockery,
And in my heart,
With love and hope, they all lie dead.
Dead rose leaves, with their fragrance fled
Of memory part.

Still warm, the dainty perfumed glove,
Her fingers pressed;
Still warm shall kisses keep whate'er
Her hand caressed.

'Tis strange what trifles sometimes wake
Sad memory's sleep,
And fill with bitter tears sad eyes,
Which never weep,
And make strong hearts their weakness feel,
And feeling own.

Her laugh, I hear upon the stair,
Her cold, sweet words so false and fair;
Safer with me, frail rosebud, is your bloom.
Forgotten soon by both, but laid away,
By one, who now recalls a happier day,
A sadder doom.

TO MY MOTHER.

On her Seventy-fifth Birthday.

HER children rise and call her blessed,
And crown her natal day
With April's loveliest opening blooms,
And strew the coming way,
Whereon shall press her gentle feet,
With all their heart's best flowers,
Love, tenderness and reverence
Shall greet the fleeting hours.

No note we take of time—her eyes,
So bright with tender fire,
Sparkle as in their days of youth,
And dearly we admire
The merry, joyful cheerfulness
That gilds with sunniest rays
The cherished home where all have spent
Their happiest, happiest days.

The merry, winning cheerfulness
That rests within her smile,
And in her voice and active step,
And permeates the while
The *very* atmosphere around;
Her books, her pen, her flowers.
Our mother dear! what filial love
Springs from these hearts of ours.

Her children rise and call her blessed,
May all her joys increase;
Her ways are ways of pleasantness,
And all her paths are peace.
Upon this mother's precious head,
We place our crown of love,
Entwined with many an earnest prayer,
And hallowed from above.

A SERENADE.

UNDER thy window, dearest,
I tune my light guitar,
While playing on its silver strings,
My ardor into passion springs,
Singing how fair art thou.

Dark shadows creep into thine eyes,
And break in gleams of light;
Like poppies red, thy dewy lips,
Thy breath, the nectar, fairy sips,
Thy tresses, plumes of night.

Like some white dove, thy forehead fair
  Nestles within thy curls,
And on thy cheek soft blushes play,
Pink as the sunset, when the day
  Her banner furls.

Thy voice is like some southern wind,
  In accents soft and low,
Its rippling cadence well reveals
The love which thro' thy being steals
  For me, I know.

Under thy casement, dearest,
  Impatiently I wait,
Speak to me, darling, with thine eyes,
And lift me into paradise
  Before the day shall break.

WHEN ABSENT FROM ME.

WHEN absent from me, tho' I sadly miss you,
If sunny June is breathing o'er the earth,
The flowers content me, and the robin red breast,
With all its notes of merry bird-like mirth;
And as the sunshine chases the hours through summer's day,
I count the moments flying, for you will not be long away.

But when you leave me, just as frosty winter
His tracery leaves upon the window pane,
Such sadness and depression steal upon me,
So deadened is my heart, by chilling rain.
While snows that follow, seem a barrier mighty,
And distance lengthens into fairy miles,
So far away you seem, my restless spirit,
Courts bitter, burning tears, instead of smiles—
Then choose your partings, dear one, when the summer
In gladness wakens happy hope and love,
For when you're absent, nature sweet contents me,
I'm not *so lonely* with warm skies above.

FOR DEAR MRS. D——S.

On her One Hundredth Birthday.

RING out sweet bells most joyfully!
What would we have you say,
This anniversary of her birth,
One hundred years to-day?
Fair flowers have blossomed on her path,
And myriad hopes and fears,
Like phantoms, rise with memory,
Through all these hundred years.

First, tell her that with happy hearts,
And reverential love,
We all unite in songful praise,
An echoing choir above—
Of her whose length of days is great,—
Who chastened 'neath the rod
Has happiness to hold and give,
Hand-maiden of her God.

Unselfish, tender, sweet and true,
Of gracious look and mien,
Each trial that has touched her brow,
Has left it more serene.
For in her heart lives Christian grace,
And every path she's trod,
Encircling all, pervading all,
She's felt the love of God.

The guiding of the little feet,
The holding of the hand,
The pointing upward to the crown,
The bright and better land;
The lullaby, the whispered prayer,
The never failing smile—
All these with mother's love to bless,
Have hallowed life the while

The rounding of a century,
Thro' the vista of its years,
In kaleidoscopic fittings,
Each date of mark appears.

The bits of cracked looking-glass, truly reflect,
A bright pair of bonnie blue eyes,
Two arms, white and shapely, tho' large, I admit,
Not any too much so in size.

She binds up with care, silken brown chesnut hair
In a manner not wanting in grace,
And her mirror well tells her, that what she sees there,
Is really a sweet, pretty face.

Oh, little one, near her, on study intent,
I fear she's not listening to you,
Too earnest her gaze, on her toilet is bent,
For her moments to dress in are few.

True, her school-days are over, her books laid aside,
But lessons of life are a part,
You study to solve a problem abstruse,
She studies to conquer a heart.

SO TIRED!

A Picture of B——h for Auntie.

SO TIRED! the loving little arms
Clasp me in close embrace,
While dreamy dark eyes sleepily
Look up into my face.
And then, the pretty golden head
Upon my shoulder slips,
And baby off to dreamland goes,
Her kiss upon my lips.

All day, the tiny feet have run
  Along my chamber floor;
Have pattered to the casement low,
  Then to the open door.
And now from off the dimpled feet,
  With heartfelt prayers anew,
Mama, unlacing carefully,
  Takes off each fairy shoe.

All day the little, busy hands,
  So cunning, soft and white,
Have into every mischief strayed,
  Whenever out of sight.
Dear little hands, which often come
  To me when at their play,
And gently smooth my hair aside
  Or aching pain away.

So tired! If heavy now and worn
And bruised are baby's feet,
Oh, Father, in the days to come
What trouble will they meet?
Life's path is rugged, torn and steep;
I can do naught but pray
That Thou wilt lead each faltering step
Along the pleasant way.

So tired! Sleep, darling, in my arms,
I lay thee down to rest;
When glad the morning sunshine comes
We'll take thee from thy nest,
All ready for another day
Of frolic, fun and glee,
The days that bring so much of love
And happiness to me.

AT BEVERLY.

THE cool, damp odors of the stilly woods
The sunshine glinting through,
The plaintive notes of Katy-did,
The falling evening dew;
The rocks all brown with Autumn leaves,
The rhythm of the sea;
Dear heart, do you remember
Those hours at Beverly?

Beverly, Mass.

'TIS ONLY SLEEP, NOT DEATH!

'TIS only sleep, beloved one,
That's fallen on thy brow;
We cannot call this slumber death,
So beautiful art thou.

'Tis only sleep. Thy loving hands
Are not forever still;
The new year finds them ready there
To do the Father's will.

'Tis only sleep, beloved one,
That's closed thy beaming eyes;
Earth's daily struggles shut from view,
Thy wakening's in the skies.

In floods of glory art thou crowned,
The darkness rolls away;
Awake art thou to live and bless,
Awake in perfect day.

Awake to work. The few short years
Of noble thoughts and deeds
Have passed above to higher aims,
To purpose that succeeds.

Awake to bless, beloved one!
Thy smile we always see;
Thy voice we hear, through time and space,
Through all eternity.

Thy presence feel! Thou art not dead;
Our hearts forevermore
Accept the promise from beyond,
Not dead, but gone before.

'Tis only sleep. The Father's voice
Called from the other side,
And angel hands we could not see
Bore thee beyond the tide.

Awake to live, beloved one;
In time we all must sleep;
Come thou with heavenly comfort down
And bid us cease to weep.

Awake to live. Oh, blessed thought!
Awake forevermore.
What joy! what love! what life in life!
Breaks from the farther shore.

MORNING—ANTICIPATION.

CHASING the butterflies over the grass,
Speeding the days, as they rapidly pass,
Plucking each rose, with its heart full of dew,
Catching each pleasure, as onward it flew.
Looking aloft for the sunshine in store,
Forgetting the trial that now is no more,
Onward—still onward—ahead is the goal,
Love, Hope, Ambition are ruling the soul.

NOON—FRUITION.

HIGH in the heavens, the midsummer sun
Turns to the East with the day just begun,
Flinging its ribbons afar to the West,
Sighs while rejoicing, for freedom and rest.
Such is man's noontide—life's battle well on;
He looks to the evening, then back to the morn;
Now alone on the summit, in fulness of power;
Pride and Experience govern the hour.

EVENING—FULFILMENT.

SWEETLY the wee stars peep from the sky,
Shadows are deepening, twilight is nigh,
Quiet the evening, Nature is stilled,
Sinking to sleep with her mission fulfilled.
Thus with life's pilgrim, who joyfully waits
The opening portals of Heaven's golden gates,
Feeling in spirit life's race is now run,
How much, how little, completion has come!

A TRIBUTE.

REDBREAST, hid amongst the branches
Of your safely-shaded home,
Hush that noisy, joyous carol;
Warble now your saddest one.
Rosebud, fair in beauty lying
In your grassy perfumed bed,
Open partially your petals
And your richest fragrance shed;
Soon your colors bright will wither
On the bosom of our dead.

Jasmine white, whose graceful clusters
Oft she wreathed amidst her curls,
Never more she'll prize your dewdrops,
Deemed by her the rarest pearls.
Never more your pendant blossoms
Caressingly will touch her brow
For the crown of an Immortal
Resteth on her ringlets now.

Dark and dusky are the chambers
Where our loved one used to tread,
And the shadows quickly gather
In the place of sunshine fled.
Redbreast, do you miss her triplet
As you warble low and sweet?
Never more her silvery laughter
Will your echoing cadence greet,
For her voice now blends with angels'
Where the stars and sunbeams meet.

TO MRS. C——S B. S——R.

SUMMER is over the land, dear;
The mocking bird sings in the woods,
And the pretty violets' sleepy eyes
Peep out from their purple hoods,
The dog-wood sweet, and the rose-pin flax,
And the jasmine's golden hue,
All greeted us with their beauties bright
The evening I drove with you.

And the tiny pond, with its bushes thick,
At the foot of the old, old mill—
How strange was the music that we heard
From its depths, that seemed so still!
And when we discovered its quaint, queer
frogs,
With a fascination keen
We watched them long as they played
and splashed
Through the water-grasses green.

Yes, Summer is over the land, dear,
And the parching sands now sigh
For the Summer rains that hasten the flowers,
And hasten the sad good-by.

But the sweet, sweet calm
And your gentle voice,
And the sunset's roseate hue,
Will linger with me when I think of the day,
And the evening, I drove with you.

Aiken, S. C., 1896.

A PRAYER.

FATHER, I kneel.
My heart obeys thy call,
"Come unto me;"
And lovingly my hopes, my tears,
My many fears,
I place with Thee.

Under the shadow of Thy cross
I rest,
Weak, weary, faint,
And yearning for the light,
My soul, sad, heavy-laden
And opprest,
Bends low to-night.

Not worthy, Father,
To be called Thy child;
Too oft I stray,
Too oft I wander
From the lighted path,
The narrow way.

But humbly penitent,
I sorrowing come,
Imploring strength,
And knowledge how to live
With earnest purpose,
And a trusting love.
Father, forgive!

REJECTION.

THE dark night grows,
And in my heart
Thought with its care
And wild unrest
Finds no repose.
All day, I've watched unceasingly
The snowflakes fall,
Covering alike all outside things
With ghastly pall.

A note beside me lies:
'Twas read with anxious eyes,
'Twas dropped with tears of woe.
It holds a tress of hair,
A curl most brightly fair,
Cut from a brow of snow.

What memories it brings
Of all the kindly things
She used to say,
And now she makes believe
Her words were to deceive.—
Ah! well-a-day!

So let it be. My heart is strong
To bear the pain, accept the wrong,
  Thus sent by thee;
This tress of thine alone I'll keep
Of all the many tokens sweet
  Which gladdened me.

THE STARS' SECRET.

YES, nod and twinkle, brilliant star,
From your home so far and high,
Flirt thro' the jasmine tattered bars,
And nothing care, will I.
The rolling hillside's flowery turf
Is flooded with your light,
And my heart has caught the radiance
Of your own bright smiles to-night.

Laugh on! Laugh on! You wicked stars,
And in quaint silence peep,
But do not tell that footsteps crept,
Yes, crept, as Angels weep;
Tell not, a loved voice whispered low,
How sweet and dear was I,
And say, 'twas but a zephyr kissed
My brow as it passed by.

Full well you know, you gently stole
Into my garden's bower,
And saw and listened all you could,
While wooing some small flower.
In a net of tangled, silvery sheen
You glimmered at our feet,
And leaflets rustled by the breeze,
Moved, your caress to meet.

'Tis a ribbon, most bewitching,
Caught beneath the chin,
What stray thoughts of mild coquetry,
Did she tie within.
When before the glass, the bow knot
Quickly found its place,
And the smiles of girlish pleasure
Deepened on her face.

Every morning, bright and early,
Tripping down the street,
This gay lassie, with her school book,
Presently, I meet.

As she nears the corner shortly,
Something else she spies,
And another hat, coquettish,
Over violet eyes.

Bends, and such a kiss of welcome
Gives its darling friend,
That with interest I watch them,
As their way they wend.

Two sweet voices gayly chatting,
Curls of chestnut hair;
And the dearest hats of leghorn
Ever made to wear.

Tiny figures, light and graceful,
  Keeping just in view,
Which are brightest to my vision,
  Violet eyes, or *blue.*

Why should I, a musty lawyer,
  Ever think of girls?
What to me are rosy dimples,
  Dark or sunny curls?

I'd forgot them in a moment,
  Pretty chapeaux, too,
But they have such thrilling glances;
  Violet eyes and *blue.*

Sometime, when the Spring is nearer,
I will roses cull,
As I pass the friends, together,
Hastening home from school.

Gently I will hand the blossoms,
Plucked with mirthful care,
To those pretty bright young creatures,
Fairest of the fair.

Sometime when the Winter's over,
I will tell to you
Which are dearest to my vision,
Violet eyes, or *blue*.

LINES TO A PICTURE OF MYSELF.

JUST *why I* prize this picture
The world may never know,
But let me tell the story
Of a few short years ago—
Of the boy I love so dearly,
And the boy who loves me so.

A golden, curly headed tot,
He played about my knees
From morn to eve his ringing laugh
Rang out most merrily,
A sunbeam in the house—always,
A constant source of joy,
What wonder that we idolized
This darling blue-eyed boy.

And when at eve the little feet
Were weary from their play,
With fond arms clasped about my neck
We would review the day,
And if, by chance, some angry word,
Or action, not just right,
Of ours—had marred the sunshine—
Before he slept that night,

Within his snowy-curtained bed
We ask God to forgive
Unhappiness, we might have caused,
And teach us how to live.

Then, with his little heart, at rest,
His waywardness forgiven,
My little one would fall to sleep,
With such a smile of heaven,
Upon the sweetly-parted lips,
Such radiance of joy,
On bended knees, most fervently
I thanked God, for my boy.

His warm affection knew no bounds,
And when he whispered *this*,
One day, when only four years old,
Imprinted with a kiss,
His blue eyes resting steadfastly,
In earnest tone and voice.
" I shall always call you, ' Sweetie,' "
How did my heart rejoice;
And I look upon this picture,
And I try to find within
Some attribute of loveliness,
Which so appealed to him.

He grew to manhood, boyish pranks,
Were lost in student's lore,
An earnestness of purpose came,
I loved him more and more—
The bravest are the tenderest,
The manliest, the same,
So I retained thro' everything
The ever cherished name.

Each little token of his love,
Is marked in letters bright,
And "Sweetie" in the name I read,
At morning and at night.

And so I smile with moistened eyes
When e'er the word I see,
For I feel it is a talisman
Between my boy and me.

Youth, grace and every worldly gift
May from my side depart,
But *nothing* e'er could wrest this name
Or memory from my heart.
Thro' past and through all future years,
It will with me abide,
This name my curly-headed lad
Has given me far and wide.

And Father, when temptations lurk
About my darling's path.
Forgetful for a moment—he
Of Thy majestic wrath,
Let thy good angels come at night,
And whispering thro' his sleep,
The name of "Sweetie," may it prove
His talisman to keep.

Through Summer suns and Winter moons,
Where'er his steps may lead,
Whenever disappointment comes,
Whenever he may need,
Thy loving care and promises,
To cheer him in life's fight,
Let Thy angels whisper "Sweetie,"
In his dreaming rest at night.

Freed from the trials of the day,
New courage will be given,
Bright visions of the years gone by,
Will come like dreams of Heaven,
And soothe him, as in days of old,
When by his mother's knee
He chose so fondly, tenderly,
This sweetest name for me.

HAVE PATIENCE, LITTLE MAMA.

MY HEART was sorely troubled
And vexed with care, that day,
And e'en my little daughter
Seemed noisy in her play.

Perhaps my voice was fretful,
My manner, none too mild,
For gently came the slight rebuke,
And sweetly spoke the child,
"Have patience, little mama."

I turned—the curly head was bent
In pleasure, on a book,
And the great wondering eyes of brown,
Had in them such a look
Of questioning thought, so grave and old,
I felt a Higher Power,
Had whispered to my little one,
In this impatient hour,
"Have patience, little mama."

And now, when angry feelings rise,
And hasty words would speak,
I look deep in my darling's eyes
And hear her utterance meek,
"Have patience, little mama."

ANTE-NUPTIAL PROMISES.

STEADFAST and true,
Dearest, to you,
Always, I promise to be,
Faithful and kind,
Watchful, yet blind,
No peccadillos to see.

Steadfast and true,
Darling, to you,
What will you promise to me?
May I not claim
Ever the same
Charming allurements, I see?

Always the smile,
Sweetest the while,
When it rests solely on me,
Always the tone
Full of love's own
Spoken so tenderly.

Steadfast and true,
Dearest, to you,
Bound by love's glittering chain
I promise forever
Thro' fair and dark weather,
Again, and again, and again.

AN IRISH WITTICISM.

AN Irishman said to Kate Reilly,
"Have ye heard the sad news of to-day?
Bridget Loony three times is a widow;
She has put her third husband away."

"And, faith, and where are they all buried?"
Sighed Kate, as she looked thro' the door.
The Irishman said with great gusto,
"She's cremated them all, to be sure."

Do you know that her women are fairer,
And charm with that langorous grace
Only born in this witching, warm Southland,
While their beauty of form and of face,
With their voices low and persuasive,
A melody all of their own,
With characters strong, yet most gentle,
And loving their dear Southern home.

Are true to themselves and their kindred,
Are true to their firm moral worth,
Are true to their heart's best affections,
And true to the land of their birth,
With sympathies tender and clinging,
In all of life's living a part,
They are fitted to grace any station,
These women of head and of heart.

And her men are both brave and chivalrous,
Both manly and tender are they,
Their homes and their firesides are sacred,
Love rules them by night and by day.
All over the page of our nation
Kentucky has written her name,
Art, finance and history's chaplets
Record with proud triumph the same.

Kentucky, dear home of the wildwood,
My tribute I feelingly pay,
Dear home of my gay, merry girlhood,
Where, restful and silent, some day,
When thy breezes are chanting a requiem,
And thy shadows in mournfulness creep,
With my loved and my lost, 'neath thy beeches,
'Neath thy blue vaulted dome, I will sleep.

Why wait till then, the lover sighs,
When all their colors gay
So long to deck my bonny bride
To-day, sweet love, to-day!

And so it was, through fields of grain,
When harvesters were hieing
Back to their homes, through poppies red,
Which in the grain were lying,

Into the little village church,
While red the sun was setting,
The lovers knelt there to be wed,
Forgotten and forgetting.

"DEAR FRIENDS, WE'VE LOVED AND LOST" AT ELBERON.

Written for the late Mr. George W. Childs.

LONG since my muse poetic fled,
And yet you ask of me,
Dear friend, a line, in such a way,
Charming with gallantry,
That, tho' I inspiration lack,
I yet, forsooth, will try
Some fancies to imprison 'ere
They all forever fly.

Last eve, the willow, near the brook,
Tinged with the dying sun,
So lovely with the shadowy tints
That fell o'er Elberon.
A thousand shapes fantastic took,
And as I dreaming stood,
The cattle, weary, wandering home,
The lonesome forest wood.

The desperate stillness twilight brings
Brought memories, one by one,
Sweet pictures true, dear friends,
We've loved and lost at Elberon!

In our little church,
So quaint and dear,
How often you and I
Have listened with a tearful heart
To that evening lullaby,
And felt that nothing sweeter
Could be sung on earth or heaven.
To all who knelt with reverent knee
Such tranquil peace was given.

And when the benediction fell.
The sacred service done,
We've mourned in silence those we've
loved
And lost at Elberon!

What recollections thrill our souls
When we recall the days,
Emblazoned on our nation's scroll,
So close where Ocean plays
Incessantly in varied moods,
It's Life Work never done,
Our country's chief, in majesty,*
Lay dead at Elberon.

He worshipped in our chapel small
Before death's summons came,
And with him, too, a soldier brave,
Most widely known to fame!
With modest mien and kindly face,
So gracious to have won
Such world-renown—
Such lives have made
Historics, Elberon!

* *General U. S. Grant to General Garfield.*

And we have known them, you and I,
And how we love to tell
Each pleasing reminiscence o'er
Of things remembered well,
Whether they happened in the morn,
Or when the day was done,
They have forever made us fond
And proud of Elberon.
So recently has sorrow come,
So suddenly it fell,
Each feeling heart at Elberon
Sounded a funeral knell.
Most philanthropic, just and brave,
To his convictions true,
A friend to all—more than a friend—
A brother, he to you.

What can we say of him passed on
Beyond the western sun,
Save his career has sanctified
And hallowed, Elberon!
We pause. The shadows rest o'er all,
The woods, the sea and sky;
So much of loving joy has gone—
We pause, and question why
A life so filled with usefulness,
Blessings conferred and won—
Surely such memories always will
Enoble, Elberon!

How green the woods at Elberon,
How dear to you and me.
The dancing waves, the quietude,
Of this hamlet by the sea.
And ever more, though far or near,
Our thoughts with fancy spun
Will linger with the friends we've loved
And lost at Elberon!

Sunny Sands, Elberon, N. J.

AN APPEAL.

JUST wait till the locusts blossom
And the meadows bloom with the May,
Till the robins chirp from the bushes
Thro' the long, long Summer day,
Till the violets burst into beauty
With Spring in their sleepy eyes,
And the sparkling April raindrops
Fall fresh from the April skies.

They will waken the nodding roses
And sweeten the balmy air,
And startle the golden crocus
From its slumbers everywhere.
Only wait some morn till the lilies
With the lazy sunbeams play,
For both singing birds and blossoms
Entreat us, dear, to stay!

When the late Spring buds are fading
From their mossy banks so bright,
And the snowdrops, pure and dainty,
Drop gently from our sight,
We will leave a kiss with the roses
And as quickly steal away,
To come, when the Autumn Angel
Shall herald the Autumn day.

TO A BASKET OF FLOWERS.

THEY lay in great clusters,
Such beautiful flowers,
All glistening with dew
From the fresh April showers.

And their fragrance delicious,
Gave ecstatic delight,
While recalling before me
Cherished dreams of the night.

When radiant in satin,
  Clinging close to your side,
You caressed the soft hair
  Of your sweet girlish bride.

And fastened with kisses
  Upon the rich lace
The white rose of all others,
  Her beauty to grace.

And the years have but mellowed
  That beauty of old,
Only adding new fervor
  To the story oft told.

Still lovers as happy,
As true and as gay,
The white rose in supremacy,
Holding her sway.

Lift up these green ivy leaves,
Most carefully,
Away in the distance,
Beside the far sea—

A dearly loved cottage
Is mirrored to me.
And the sunshine is tingeing
With dim yellow light,

The ivy which hides
  The gray shingles from sight,
And holds in its embrace,
  So shining and green,

This home of our hearts,
  This dearly loved scene;
Thus the ivy forever
  Is sacred to me,

For it whispers of love
  In our home by the sea.
How fragrant this heliotrope,
  Darling, for you.

I eagerly gather the purplish bloom,
And sigh that it withers
And dies all so soon.
I have seen your dark eyes
So suffused with delight,
When a spray of its blossoms
Was brought to your sight.
Your pet of all others,
This delicate flower—
You love it—and I,
With a loyalty true,
Will heliotrope wear
Darling child just for you.

Here are violets, jasmine,
And lilies so white,
Primroses most modest,
Far hidden from sight;
Fragrant leaves of geranium,
And smilax so green.
Faint comes a new perfume,
Still stronger it grows
With its rich, spicy fragrance,
Overpowering the rose.

Ah! I know them too well,
These carnations of light,
So pure and so waxy.
What memories to-night
Stir my heart to its depths—
Kindred flowers, just as fair,
Have long since have hid
Away from my gaze,
'Neath a small coffin lid.

They have kissed baby's fingers,
Most dainty and fair,
And slumbered amongst
The soft curls of her hair.

They have gone with my babe
To the realms of the blest,
These snowy carnations
With her are at rest.

And to me they seem twining
The harp of bright gold,
Where my darling is singing
In Jesus' sweet fold,
Secure evermore from
Dust and from mold.

LINES TO AN INFANT.

LIKE violets in a drift of snow,
Lie Baby's eyes so sweet,
And roseate petals pale before
The pink of baby's feet—
While in the grasp so soft and warm,
Of baby's tiny hand
There rests a power no king can seize,
A power, no hearts withstand.

How far beyond us baby looks,
What can the darling see?
Through time and space he seems to gaze,
Through all futurity.
Are still the angels sheltering him,
And in the dimpling smile,
Lurks there the touch of Angel's lips
Unseen by us, the while?

Are angel voices whispering
His lullaby to sleep?
And will they guard through coming years
Those precious little feet,
So eager now to tread the path
Of life's long weary way,
Although it opens at the goal,
Into the perfect day?

Into these tiny, tender hands
Will they Heaven's blessings press?
And soothe in hours to come each pain,
With quick and fond caress?
And as the years in wanton glee
Steal infancy away,
Will they with jealous ministry
Protect each passing day?

Yes, little one, we have no fear,
Let all thy powers increase,
Thy ways be filled with gentleness,
Thy paths with restful peace.
And tho' at times the cross may weigh
An anxious spirit down,
Press on, press on, my darling one,
At last to wear the crown.

FOR EMILY'S ALBUM.

THE fleeting minutes, quickly pass,
The hours as meteors fly,
And soon, too soon, will come the day,
When I must breathe, "good-bye,"

I would not ask, dear cousin mine,
Remembrance oft from thee,
For well I feel, most frequently
Thy thoughts, will rest on me,

Gaze further into distance,
And the moon in silvery sheen
Wakens the fire-flies of the deep,
To sparkle on the scene.

Old Ocean courts the lady fair,
And shimmers with delight,
While his many breakers roar and scream
And frolic, in their might.

Coquettish stars, in silence peep,
From Heaven's blue vaulted dome,
And whisper to their legions lost,
In the water's treacherous foam.

Again, and yet again, the rays
Of retrospection fall,
And Summer's scenes are graven each,
On memory's picture wall.

The future lies in darkness hushed—
But trust for joys as bright,
It is hope's penetrating beam,
Illumes the darkest night.

And now a wish, sweet cousin mine,
Before the sad farewell,
A wish for one, I dearly love,
My feelings fain would tell.

May guardian spirits watch thy life
With ever changeless care,
Until thy hands Heaven's harp shall hold,
Its crown thy forehead wear.

"FLYING DUTCHMAN."

A Child's Ode to her Favorite Saddle-Horse.

AND have you never seen him,
My pretty chestnut steed,
With eyes so soft and gentle,
Yet full of fiery speed?
And have you never heard him
Come dashing on apace,
When I am in the saddle,
All ready for a race?

Along the even roadside,
We take a splendid run,
And when we tackle mountains,
I tell you it is fun.
Oh, you must surely see him,
This pretty chestnut steed,
With neck so high and arching,
Of gallant race-horse breed,
With step so light and prancing
And skin so smooth and bright,
With gait so firm and even,
"Flying Dutchman," my delight.

And when at dear old Elberon,
Close to old Ocean's roar,
We spin along the sandy road,
Close to the sandy shore,
Then back into the country near,
We canter on our way,
Stopping beneath the apple trees,
To rest each pleasant day.
At Mount Desert where round us stood
The mountains blue and high,
I tell you we had lots of fun,
My dear old Dutch and I.
Past hill and dale and meadow brook
And through the forest thick,
O'er wild-flowers fresh and mossy banks,
O'er bramble, stone and stick.

On, on we'd go, free as the wind,
Like lightning flash, would fly,
So fast we rode, those August days,
My dear old Dutch, and I.
The little farm house nestles low,
In charming green and shade,
Its country garden is so dear,
Where often we have played.
The pearly moonbeams stealing soft,
Across the landscape dim,
And silvering with their mellow light,
The fir trees dark and grim.

The fairy rowboats, by the tide,
  Kept rocking to and fro,
With motion scarce perceptible,
  So even and so slow.
The tiny stars just wakening
  In the darkening, twilight sky—
We've seen some pretty pictures,
  My dear old Dutch and I.

We've galloped on so happily,
  Without a thought or care,
And felt t'was such a pleasant world
  So beautiful and fair,
With its daisies on the hillsides
  And its swallows in the air,
But I'm ready now to mount him,
  And must haste to say "good-bye,"
For *we go to seek new pastures*,
  My dear old Dutch and I.

IN MEMORIAM.

OH, for one glance beyond,
To see thee, darling, in our Saviour's arms,
Thy precious head, with all its baby charms,
Close to His tender breast!
Not with the eyes of faith, but human sight,
Clothed in the garments of celestial light,
Calmly at rest.

Just for one glance beyond!
Then might this restless, weary longing cease,
Then might I still my wayward heart to peace,
And hush its cries.
Then might I reason all sad thoughts away,
While viewing thee in that most radiant day,
Beyond the skies.

Only *once* more to feel
Thy baby hands upon my waiting cheek,
Those tiny hands, which even in their sleep,
Loved to caress.
Those little hands, how could I let them go!
May they, in time, remove my cup of woe
And gently bless.

Only *once* more to feel,
Thy baby head with all its silken hair,
To press thy brow, so coldly smooth and fair.
To kiss again
Thy rosebud mouth, just breaking into smiles,
To watch once more thy pretty baby wiles,
But all is vain!

What, what is vain?
Where is my faith, oh, sad rebellious heart?
Help me, oh, Lord! beneath the stinging
smart
Of this, Thy chastening rod.
I sink so crushed, so bleeding and so torn,
That in my agony, I scarce can own,
The will of God.

I know that it is well,
That with a Father's fond and loving care,
That precious life so short and yet so fair
Is guarded well.
That for some reason good, yea, most divine,
The truth of which, will yet more clearly shine,
Than I can tell.

That cherished life, so sweet,
Was needed on the far-off heavenly shore,
Needed to draw me on, still more and more
To Jesus' feet.

London, England.

Bright to-day is reigning now,
In her sportive beauty,
Take her to your eager arms,
Make the most of all her charms,
Pleasure, fun and duty.

'Tis to-morrow, witching sprite,
That allures us ever,
Always near us, in coquetting,
Everything for her forgetting,
We possess her—never.

"SHE HATH DONE WHAT SHE COULD."

IN a churchyard, old and musty,
Lingering late one day,
Poring over quaint inscriptions
On the tombstones gray;

Marvelling at the various wordings,
Some not understood,
Which were graven in the granite,
Marble, stone and wood.

Eloquent in silent teaching,
Many, though, there be,
"None, thought I, quite tell life's story,
None appeal to me,"

Till this simple line, so tersely,
Seemed a void to fill,
Only these few words, I give them
As I see them still:
"She hath done what she could."

Words of comfort hath she spoken
To the weak and old,
" Poured the oil on troubled waters,"
Gathered in the fold.

Many doubting, timid spirits,
Shedding all around
Useful, happy ministrations,
Blessings without bound.
" She hath done what she could."

She hath won with winning brightness
Hearts of old and young;
She hath sorrowed with the anguished,
Sang with those who've sung.

Given in many a kindly action,
Everywhere she stood,
Sympathy and glad assistance—
Doing what she could.

This, to me, told well life's story.
What can erring man
More accomplish than by doing
Just the best he can?

Crushing selfishness beneath him,
Spreading far and near
Happiness which oft is hidden
In a smile or tear.

Such a simple, lasting fragrance
Seemed to stir the ground
All about this small enclosure,
With its grassy mound,

That into my inner feelings
I have placed these words,
Sweeter than the songs of children,
Or the songs of birds,
"She hath done what she could."

DREAM FAIRIES.

THEY come down the sunshine's golden stair
And bore my baby away,
The sweet dream fairies, so many and fair,
From the shores of eternal day.

Go with them, little one, just for a while,
For they tell of most exquisite things;
They will carry you far from the world of care
My lady-bird sweet, with the silky hair,
On the down of their wide-spread wings.

Daintily low will their lullaby be
As they float thro' the misty air,
And gathering roses and violets sweet,
Onward they'll hasten, so fast and fleet,
Till a golden crown they bear.

Then thou'lt come to me, darling child,
With a wonderful look on thy brow;
'Tis the Saviour's kiss, for in blissful dreams
Glimpses of Heaven, bright golden gleams,
Break on my baby now.

And the angels whisper and warble and sing,
With love in their beautiful eyes,
And they bear a harp with a jeweled string,
And blessings many on quivering wing,
Through the gates of Paradise.

Dream on, precious one, thro' thy young life,
Of all things happy and bright,
Then when dark trouble, trial and fear
Draw, with deep sorrow, still nearer and near,
Keep the dream fairies in sight.

MY LADY FAIR.

HOW sweet you are, my lady fair,
This radiant summer morning.
Your laughing eye, and sunny hair,
Dull care and trouble scorning.
The flowery clover 'neath your feet,
Is not more dainty, fresh, or sweet.

The rosebuds in the garden near,
Must droop in sad repining,
When on your breast they nestle close,
Within your curls reclining.
For 'neath the damask of you cheek,
Their crimson beauties fade and fleet.

How gay you are, my lady fair,
In all your girlish beauty,
To love, admire, caress, adore,
Most surely is my duty.
So chat, and laugh, and brightly smile,
My heart you're breaking, all the while.

But are you kind, my lady fair,
I hesitate in asking.
I fear you are a skilled coquette,
No tender feelings masking.
And yet, I must confess it true,
I'm very much in love with you.

Bright silver stream, whose murmurs lull
The sunlight fays to sleep,
While through their drapery's misty sheen
The whispering wavelets creep.
Here will I dream, and dreaming look
Far in your waters deep!

For I would woo some fairy beam,
To steal awhile apart,
And weave a golden, glittering mesh
Around my happy heart.
To hold within its radiant bands,
My thoughts of him, so sweet,

And keep a love forever young,
With sunny joy replete.
What gift is thine, O ! gentle stream,
When from thy quiet breast,
Heaven's threatening rain-clouds chase away
The sunshine bright and blest,

That in thy depths, as fleets the storm,
Imprisoned sunbeams shine,
As if some angel's wings had lent
A radiance more divine ?
O Father ! Teach my soul the art
Thou giv'st the sighing stream.

Which ever in the darkest hour
  Conceals some cheering beam,
That as life's shadows come and go,
  And break in doubts and fears,
My soul, illumed by trusting love,
  May smile through bitterest tears.

A LULLABY.

WITH fond love I press him
Close, close to my breast,
And sing with a light heart
My baby to rest.

While the dream fairies hover
In clouds o'er his head,
And pillow with blessings,
His soft, downy bed.

And I laugh, while I carol,
To think that no king,
Ever reigned with more homage
Than this little thing,
That I fold with caressings
So tight in my arms,
With the prayer that
Heaven's blessings,
May shield him from harms.

So golden the pretty head,
  Close to my breast,
So blue the violet eyes,
  Now closed in rest;
So soft the baby hands—
  So pink the wee chin.
So dear this little one,
  Baby, my king.

HW 1VPD 2